

a visible and active member of the community in the city of Stockton and San Joaquin County, California, promoting patriotism and citizenship.

I urge you to swiftly advance H.R. 6722 to recognize this heroic veteran and his immense contribution to our nation. We believe the Richard A. Pittman VA Clinic will serve countless veterans throughout the region and uphold our promise to those who gave our country their all.

Sincerely,

DAWN M. NAPIER,
Commander,
VFW Department of California.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
DEPARTMENT OF CALIFORNIA,

March 26, 2022.

Re Department of California supports naming the Stockton Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) after the late Master Sergeant Richard Pittman, USMC (Ret).

DEAREST CHAIRS AND RANKING MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE VETERANS AFFAIRS: As Commander of the Department of California Disabled American Veterans representing over 70,000 DAV Life Members in the State of California and in recognition of our fallen veterans and their survivors . . . as a department of veterans—who advocate daily for the heroes that served this nation; we sincerely support the renaming the Stockton Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC) after the late Master Sergeant Richard Pittman, USMC (Ret).

Master Sergeant Pittman, received the Medal of Honor for his Bravery for the following: While Company (I) was conducting an operation along the axis of a narrow jungle trail, the leading company elements suffered numerous casualties when they suddenly came under heavy fire from a well-concealed and numerically superior force. Hearing the engaged marines' calls for more firepower, MSgt. Pittman quickly exchanged his rifle for a machine gun and several belts of ammunition, left the relative safety of his platoon, and unhesitatingly rushed forward to aid his comrades.

Taken under intense enemy small-arms fire at point-blank range during his advance, he returned the fire, silencing the enemy position. As MSgt. Pittman continued to forge forward to aid members of the leading platoon, he again came under heavy fire from two automatic weapons which he promptly destroyed. Learning that there were additional wounded marines 50 yards further along the trail, he braved a withering hail of enemy mortar and small-arms fire to continue onward. As he reached the position where the leading marines had fallen, he was suddenly confronted with a bold frontal attack by 30 to 40 enemy.

Totally disregarding his safety, he calmly established a position in the middle of the trail and raked the advancing enemy with devastating machine-gun fire. His weapon rendered ineffective, he picked up an enemy submachine gun and, together with a pistol seized from a fallen comrade, continued his lethal fire until the enemy force had withdrawn. Having exhausted his ammunition except for a grenade which he hurled at the enemy; he then rejoined his platoon.

MSgt. Pittman's daring initiative, bold fighting spirit, and selfless devotion to duty inflicted many enemy casualties, disrupted the enemy attack, and saved the lives of many of his wounded comrades.

We feel that this is a non-controversial name—in fact, one that reflects great credit on our San Joaquin County community, and which will serve as an inspiration to the clinic's staff and to the veterans whom they will serve.

Please join me in honoring the incredible life of Master Sergeant Richard Pittman, USMC (Ret) and signing onto the letter of support to the House and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee.

Thank you for your support of America's disabled veterans and their survivors.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL KERR,
Commander.
DANIEL CONTRERAS,
DAV National 2nd
Vice Commander Adjutant/CEO.
GERALD G. WILSON, Jr.,
Legislative Director.

□ 1430

I again thank Representative MCNERNEY for championing this legislation and for his hard work in helping to make this new VA clinic in San Joaquin Valley a reality. It will serve Stockton-area veterans well for decades to come.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 6722, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6722, a bill to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in French Camp, California, as the Richard A. Pittman VA Clinic.

Richard Pittman was born on May 26, 1945, in French Camp, California. At age 20, he joined the Marines. A year later, in July of 1966, Lance Corporal Pittman's unit was moving on a trail in the jungles of Vietnam when the unit ahead of his came under heavy enemy fire.

Upon hearing this, Lance Corporal Pittman took his machine gun, along with several belts of ammo, and ran toward the sound of gunfire in true Marine Corps fashion. He came under intense enemy fire but managed to continue advancing toward the Marine unit that was under attack.

Faced by dozens of enemy combatants, he forced them to retreat by using a combination of machine-gun fire, captured enemy weapons, weapons from his fellow fallen marines, and hand grenades.

Due to his courageous actions in battle, Lance Corporal Pittman, now a sergeant, was presented the Medal of Honor by President Johnson in May of 1968.

He retired as a master sergeant, after serving more than two decades in the corps. Master Sergeant Pittman's selfless devotion of duty and fighting spirit to save the lives of his wounded comrades will be truly honored by having his name on this VA clinic.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. MCNERNEY), my friend, the author of this legislation, who serves on the Committee on Energy and Commerce and the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Speaker, when I first came to Congress, one of my ear-

liest observations was the burden of veterans in my district to get to the nearest full-service veterans' health facility. In fact, I even took the drive from Stockton, California, to Palo Alto. It took all day. It became a top priority of mine to bring veterans a facility in my district to reduce the burden of the lengthy travel for local veterans.

My son Michael, who convinced me to run for Congress in 2004, himself a veteran, once told me of all of my accomplishments in Congress, I would be the proudest of what I had done for veterans. He was absolutely right.

The VA clinic currently under construction in French Camp is one of my proudest accomplishments. As we move forward to opening its doors, it is only fitting that this facility honor a local hero.

Master Sergeant Richard A. Pittman was born in French Camp and served with heroism during the Vietnam war. As his unit was moving along a trail near the demilitarized zone, a group of marines ahead of him came under attack.

Upon hearing this, Lance Corporal Pittman rushed to the aid of his fellow comrades, successfully destroying the enemy's weapons while under heavy enemy fire. He went on to aid additional wounded marines further along the trail, fighting back an attack by 30 to 40 enemy fighters and forcing the enemy to withdraw.

His actions that day saved many wounded comrades and led to him being awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

I knew Richard Pittman personally, and he was a true patriot. He was unassuming and did not seek out attention or publicity.

My congressional district and beyond mourned his passing. It is only fitting to name this new community-based outreach clinic, or CBOC, after Master Sergeant Richard A. Pittman.

I ask my colleagues to please join me in voting "yes" on H.R. 6722 and officially designating this new facility as the Richard A. Pittman VA Clinic.

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I again ask all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 6722, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6722.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

LT. COL. LUKE WEATHERS, JR. VA
MEDICAL CENTER

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill

(H.R. 6863) to designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Memphis, Tennessee, as the "Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center".

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 6863

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., was born December 16, 1922, in Grenada, Mississippi, then moved to Memphis, Tennessee, at age five.

(2) Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and is an alumnus of Xavier University in New Orleans.

(3) Upon his graduation, Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., enlisted in one of the first training programs for Black pilots, beginning his journey as a Tuskegee Airman.

(4) Within his first few years active in the war, Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., named his plane "Spirit of Beale Street", in honor of his hometown, Memphis, Tennessee. He flew this plane with the "Red Tails".

(5) He was credited with shooting down German planes while protecting United States Army Air Corps bombers and shooting down two Messerschmitt 109s in Italy while escorting a damaged B-24 Liberator bomber.

(6) During his military service, he rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

(7) Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., received numerous honors and awards throughout his long and distinguished career.

(8) Among them, he was presented with an Air Medal with 7 clusters and an American Theater Ribbon Victory Medal during his military service.

(9) Following the war, Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., returned to Memphis, receiving a hero's welcome and a key to the city.

(10) On July 13, 1947, he married LaVerne Nailling at St. Therese-Little Flowers Catholic Church in Memphis.

(11) In 1960, he accepted a job with the Federal Aviation Administration (hereinafter, the "FAA") as an air traffic control specialist in Anchorage, Alaska.

(12) In 1965, Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., moved back to Memphis, becoming the first Black air traffic controller in Memphis.

(13) Weathers later held positions with the FAA in Atlanta, Georgia, and the District of Columbia, where he eventually retired in 1985, after serving as a reservist in the military for 23 years.

(14) During retirement, Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., remained active with the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. and continued to support African Americans in the military.

(15) In 1995, Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., moved to Tucson, Arizona, shortly after marrying Jacqueline Moore Weathers.

(16) In 2007, Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., and the Tuskegee Airmen were honored with a Congressional Gold Medal.

(17) On October 15, 2011, Luke Joseph Weather, Jr., died in Tucson, Arizona, at the age of 90, leaving behind his wife, two sons and daughters, 12 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren as well as a legacy of countless lives he touched.

(18) On January 20, 2012, Lieutenant Colonel Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., was interred at Arlington National Cemetery.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF THE LT. COL. LUKE WEATHERS, JR. VA MEDICAL CENTER.

The medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs located in Memphis, Ten-

nessee, shall, after the date of the enactment of this Act, be known and designated as the "Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center". Any reference in any law, regulation, map, document, paper, or other record of the United States to such medical center shall be considered to be a reference to the Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ELLZEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to insert extraneous material on H.R. 6863.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor the memory of Lieutenant Colonel Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., a combat fighter pilot with the legendary Tuskegee Airmen, the first ever African-American air traffic controller in Memphis, and a trailblazing advocate for African Americans' military service.

The bill before us, H.R. 6863, would appropriately name the VA's medical center in Memphis, Tennessee, the Lieutenant Colonel Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center.

Lieutenant Colonel Weathers embodied service to country in a way that we all can admire. Born in 1922 in Mississippi, Lieutenant Colonel Weathers moved to Memphis, Tennessee, at age 5, the place he would call home for decades after.

After graduating from Xavier University in 1942, Lt. Col. Weathers returned to Memphis where he read a newspaper article about the newly created aviation cadet program in Tuskegee, Alabama, one of the first such programs in the country meant for aspiring African-American pilots.

Despite the racial discrimination he endured, Lieutenant Colonel Weathers secured a one-on-one meeting with Memphis political boss E.H. Crump, who personally recommended Weathers' nomination to the Tuskegee program to President Roosevelt. From there, Lieutenant Colonel Weathers began his distinguished military service, fighting as a combat pilot among the legendary Red Tails during World War II.

His noble accomplishments during the war included shooting down two German planes while protecting U.S. Army Air Corps bombers and shooting down two additional enemy aircraft in Italy while escorting a damaged B-24 Liberator bomber.

Even after the war, Lieutenant Colonel Weathers' service to his country continued. In 1960, he became an air

traffic control specialist with the Federal Aviation Administration, and soon after he became the first Black air traffic controller in Memphis.

Lieutenant Colonel Weathers retired in 1985, all the while serving as a reservist in the military for 23 years. In retirement, he advocated tirelessly on behalf of African Americans in the military, paving the way for generations of citizens to serve this country honorably, just as he did.

Lieutenant Colonel Weathers' lifetime of service earned him multiple honors and awards, including the Congressional Gold Medal in 2007, alongside 300 surviving Tuskegee Airmen.

Lieutenant Colonel Weathers passed away in October 2011. Today, he and the Tuskegee Airmen continue to be a symbol of justice, determination, and solidarity, ideals which embody the very best of this country.

The naming of the Memphis VA Medical Center in Lieutenant Colonel Weather's honor is a fitting tribute to his lifetime of service.

Mr. Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support for H.R. 6863 from The American Legion, the VFW, and Disabled American Veterans, as well as the Tennessee delegations of the House and Senate.

THE AMERICAN LEGION,
DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE,

Nashville, TN, February 22, 2022.

Hon. STEVE COHEN,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN COHEN: Please accept this letter as a demonstration of the total support of the American Legion Department of Tennessee, in recognition of renaming the Memphis Veterans Administration Medical Center in Memphis, Tennessee as "Lieutenant Colonel "Luke" Weathers Veterans Medical Center."

Lieutenant Colonel Weathers was a Grenada Mississippi native and was the first-ever black Air Traffic Controller in Memphis. Lieutenant Colonel Weathers was a member of the famed Tuskegee Airman from 1942 to 1945.

The Tuskegee Airmen flew 15,000 missions over North Africa and Europe during the Second World War. Luke downed two German fighter planes that attacked Army Air Force Bombers that he had been charged with escorting.

Lt Colonel Weathers, like other Tuskegee Airmen during World War II, conducted missions throughout Northern Africa and Europe for allied Forces and when Lt Colonel Weathers returned to Memphis from the war in 1945, he was presented with a parade down Beale Street and with the job opportunities for a star black pilot were scarce and Luke Weathers was fortunate to obtain a job as the first black air traffic controller at the FAA in Memphis.

The American Legion Department of Tennessee would like to honor his amazing legacy of service to God, Country, his fellow veterans, and his community of Memphis, TN with our full support and we wholeheartedly support and encourage the committee to sponsor and support legislation naming the new Aurora Veterans Clinic after this distinguished WWII Veteran.

On behalf of the 20,000 members of The American Legion in Tennessee I am proud to fully, endorse this effort.

Sincerely,
LARRY V. KERSEY,
Commander, The American Legion,
Department of Tennessee.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS,
DISTRICT 10,

Shelby County, TN, February 18, 2022.

To Congressman STEVE COHEN,
Via VFW Tennessee Department Commander
Bryan Walker
Subject Renaming Memphis VA Medical Center

It is with great pleasure that I write to tell you that our members support the renaming of the Memphis Veterans Administration Medical Center after the late Tuskegee Airman, FAA Air Traffic Control Specialist, and Memphis Civil Rights Pioneer, Lieutenant Colonel Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr.

Very Respectfully,

KAPELL EUGENE,
District 10 Commander.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS,
DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE,
March 17, 2022.

To Congressman STEVE COHEN,
Re Renaming Memphis VA Medical Center

It is with great pleasure that the membership of the Department of Tennessee, Veterans of Foreign Wars supports the renaming of the Memphis Veterans Administration Medical Center after the late Lieutenant Colonel Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., a Tuskegee Airman, FAA Air Traffic Control Specialist and Memphis Civil Rights Pioneer.

BRIAN WALKER,
Department Commander.
JOHN SCOTT,
Department Adjutant/
Quartermaster.
KAPELL EUGENE,
District 10 Commander.

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS,
DEPARTMENT OF TENNESSEE,
Lawrenceburg, TN, December 21, 2021.

Re Support Legislation in Naming the Memphis VAMC After Lt. Col. Luke Weathers Jr.

Congressman MIKE BOST,
Ranking Member, House Committee on Veterans Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN BOST: Disabled American Veterans (DAV) Department of Tennessee, with its membership of over 17,600 Veterans; wishes to support a legislative initiative by Congressman Steve Cohen in naming the Memphis VA Medical Center after Lt. Col. Luke Weathers Jr. Lt. Col. Weathers flew as one of the original Tuskegee Airman with the "Red Tails" during World War II and later returned to Memphis, Tennessee to work in aviation and serve as a mentor to many in the military and aviation communities. Weathers, who died in October in Tucson, Arizona, at the age of 90, was credited with shooting down two Messerschmitt 109's in Italy while escorting a damaged B-24 Liberator bomber in 1944. He returned to a parade in his honor in his home town of Memphis in 1945 and was given the keys to the city.

DAV Department of Tennessee's membership would appreciate your support in honoring Lt. Col. Weathers by naming the Memphis, Tennessee VA Medical Center after him. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL L. HARMAN, II,
Commander, Department of Tennessee,
Disabled American Veterans.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, DC, March 15, 2022.

Chairman MARK TAKANO,
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MIKE BOST,
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN TAKANO AND RANKING MEMBER BOST: Please accept this letter as a demonstration of our support for H.R. 6863, a bill that would designate the Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) in Memphis, Tennessee as the "Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center."

Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr. was born in Grenada, Mississippi and moved to Memphis, Tennessee when he was five. He graduated from Booker T. Washington High School in Memphis and Xavier University in New Orleans. He then enlisted in a training program for Black pilots, beginning his journey as a Tuskegee Airman in the U.S. Army Air Corps. Weathers flew with the "Red Tails" in North Africa, Italy, France, and Germany. He served with distinction, rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and receiving numerous honors and awards throughout his career.

At the end of the Second World War, Lt. Col. Weathers returned to Memphis where he received a hero's welcome and a key to the city. He participated in a war bond effort, raising \$1.5 million, the most raised by any African American Group. In honor of this achievement, a B-24 Liberator was named "Spirit of Beale Street."

Weathers began a career as an Air Traffic Control Specialist and in 1965 became the first Black air traffic controller in Memphis. Throughout his life, he remained active with the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. and was a mentor to countless youth who had an interest in the military or aviation.

It is fitting to have the Memphis VAMC to be named after a veteran with such a distinguished career and who represents the city so well. We are proud to support this effort.

Sincerely,

TIM BURCHETT,
JIM COOPER,
SCOTT DESJARLAIS,
MARK E. GREEN, MD,
DIANA HARSHBARGER,
DAVID KUSTOFF,
CHUCK FLEISCHMANN,
JOHN ROSE,

Members of Congress.

U.S. SENATE,
Washington, DC, June 24, 2022.

Chairman MARK TAKANO,
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

Hon. MIKE BOST,
House Committee on Veterans' Affairs,
Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN TAKANO AND RANKING MEMBER BOST: We write to express our support for H.R. 6863, a bill that would name the Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center (VAMC) in Memphis, Tennessee the "Lt. Col. Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center."

Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr. was born in Grenada, Mississippi and moved to Memphis, Tennessee at age five. Upon his graduation from Booker T. Washington High School and Xavier University, he enlisted in a training program for African-American pilots. Upon completion, he began his career as a Tuskegee Airman in the U.S. Army Air Corps. Weathers flew with the "Red Tails" in North Africa, Italy, France, and Germany. He was decorated with honors and awards throughout his career. For his exemplary service, Weathers rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Lt. Col. Weathers received a hero's welcome and a key to the city upon his return

to Memphis following World War II. He then raised \$1.5 million in a war bond effort—the most of any African-American Group. A B-24 Liberator was named the "Spirit of Beale Street" to honor this great achievement.

In 1965, Lt. Col. Weathers became the first African-American air traffic controller in Memphis. He would spend the rest of his career as an Air Traffic Control Specialist. He remained active with the Tuskegee Airmen, Inc. throughout his life and mentored countless youth with interests in the military or aviation.

It is fitting to have the Memphis VAMC named after a veteran with such a distinguished career, who embodied the spirit of the Volunteer State. We wholeheartedly support this effort.

Sincerely,

MARSHA BLACKBURN,
U.S. Senator.
BILL HAGERTY,
U.S. Senator.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I wholeheartedly support this bill, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 6863, a bill to designate the medical center of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Memphis, Tennessee, the Lieutenant Colonel Luke Weathers, Jr. VA Medical Center."

Luke Joseph Weathers, Jr., was born on December 16, 1922, in Grenada, Mississippi, but called Memphis his home from an early age.

Upon graduating from college, Luke Weathers joined a newly organized Army Air Corps training program. While there, he earned his pilot wings and commission as a second lieutenant and began his journey as a Tuskegee Airman.

Lieutenant Weathers flew with the Red Tails in North Africa, Italy, France, and Germany. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for escorting and defending a damaged B-24 bomber against eight German fighters in November of 1944. He shot down two of them.

Luke Weathers rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in a distinguished and highly rewarded military career.

He began a second career as an air traffic control specialist, and in 1965, he became the first Black air traffic controller in Memphis.

Throughout his life, he remained active with the Tuskegee Airmen and was a mentor to countless youth who had an interest in the military or aviation fields.

I cannot think of an individual more deserving to represent the VA presence in Memphis.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN), my very good friend, who is the author of this legislation. He serves on the Committee on the Judiciary as chairman of the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Subcommittee. He also serves on

the Committee on Natural Resources and the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman TAKANO and Ranking Member BOST for bringing this bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of our bill, H.R. 6863, to name the Memphis VA hospital in honor of a true World War II hero and a hero in American life, Lieutenant Colonel Luke Weathers, Jr.

I didn't know of Lieutenant Colonel Weathers until his passing, and I read about his passing in the Memphis newspaper, the Commercial Appeal, and I went and attended his funeral at St. Theresa Little Flower Church, where he was a member. I think he integrated the church. The church is a large church and it was packed.

In spite of the fact that he had moved to retire to Arizona, possibly in Tucson, maybe 15 or 20 years earlier, the people knew Lieutenant Colonel Weathers, they knew his work, they knew his good deeds in the community, and they knew his actions. I was honored to be at that funeral, and I thought this man is something else.

It has been well documented what he did with his life and with the Tuskegee Airmen and the Red Tails and the several airplanes he shot down.

There is a movie coming out now that is getting a lot of advertisement, and all Members of Congress have been invited to see this week, called "Devotion," about an African-American pilot who was a star in the Korean war.

It was Lieutenant Colonel Weathers and the Tuskegee Airmen who were the predecessors of that gentleman's opportunity to defend his country and to show his skills. That is another reason why his name at the veterans hospital will be so important, to inspire people to go into a military career and pursue aviation, which Lieutenant Colonel Weathers encouraged people to do, particularly African-American young men.

I was also honored to attend his funeral. It was a funeral with a flyover, military caisson, and "Taps," as befitting a gentleman who had served his country as he did.

His family is very strong in Memphis in support of their father's legacy. I met them in St. Theresa Little Flower Church at his funeral in 2011.

Lieutenant Colonel Weathers paved the way for many to become pilots, and his legacy endures in the countless lives that he touched.

I thank our Tennessee delegation who unanimously supported this legislation and this naming of the new Memphis VA Medical Center. It was also endorsed by The American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I thank Chairman TAKANO, Ranking Member BOST, and the members of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee for advancing the bill through committee and bringing it to the floor today. I

thank Mr. HOYER for his help with that, too.

We have done a good thing today to honor a true American hero. I think fondly of him. I had commissioned a plaque to be created and installed at the Memphis airport recognizing his service in the Federal Aviation Administration and integrating that facility. I am honored I will be a part of keeping his memory alive forever.

□ 1445

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to close, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ELLZEY. Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I am honored to be associated with the passage of this bill to honor Lieutenant Colonel Weathers. I have the distinction of representing the University of California, Riverside, where resides the Tuskegee Airmen Archives.

I am reminded by the Speaker's presence on the dais and the presence of the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ELLZEY) that you are both veterans and that serving our veterans and remembering our veterans is not about two colors. It is not about red or blue, but it is about red, white, and blue, and that all colors of America have fought for the three colors, and they bled one color.

It is important for us to remember the poignancy of our segregated fighting units of World War II, the last war in which we had segregated fighting units, and mark the progress that this country has made and that we must continue to make, so it is fitting that I call on all my colleagues to join me in passing H.R. 6863.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 6863.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAJOR GENERAL OLIVER W. DILLARD VA OUTPATIENT CLINIC

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 7903) to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic in Canton, Michigan, as the "Major General Oliver W. Dillard VA Outpatient Clinic," as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 7903

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) Oliver W. Dillard was born on September 28, 1926, in Margaret, Alabama.

(2) In 1945, following basic training he was drafted and was assigned to the 349th Field Artillery Group in Germany as part of the World War II army of occupation. He was selected to serve as company clerk and began to work his way through the ranks, attaining Technical Sergeant.

(3) Dillard successfully completed the Officer Candidate School (OCS) selection process and was approved for attendance at the Infantry OCS at Fort Benning in January 1947. He received a commission as a Second Lieutenant of Infantry after graduating from Infantry OCS in July 1947 and was the honor graduate of his Infantry officers basic course.

(4) He served in command and intelligence positions in Korea, Germany, and Vietnam.

(5) During his service, Dillard graduated from the Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in 1958, where he was one of only three Black officers in his class. After CGSC, he completed his bachelor's degree at the University of Omaha leveraging his earlier studies at Tuskegee Institute.

(6) In 1965, Mr. Dillard graduated from the National War College, becoming the first Black officer to do so. He graduated at the top of his class.

(7) MG Dillard's military awards include the Distinguished Service Medal with one Oak Leaf Cluster, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Bronze Star with one Oak Leaf Cluster and "V" Device, the Purple Heart, the Air Medal, the Combat Infantryman's Badge with Star (two awards), the Army Staff Identification Badge, and the Vietnam Distinguished Service Order (1st and 2d Class). Dillard also received two civilian awards from the Republic of Vietnam, the Vietnam Rural Revolutionary Development Medal and the Vietnam Ethnic Development Service Medal (1st Class).

(8) Dillard was inducted into the United States Army's Military Intelligence Hall of Fame in 2012, the Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame in 2012, and the Alabama Military Hall of Honor in 2013.

(9) He died in Canton, Michigan, in 2015, and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

SEC. 2. DESIGNATION OF DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMUNITY-BASED OUTPATIENT CLINIC LOCATED IN CANTON, MICHIGAN.

(a) DESIGNATION.—The Department of Veterans Affairs community-based outpatient clinic located in Canton, Michigan, shall after the date of the enactment of this Act be known and designated as the "Major General Oliver W. Dillard VA Clinic".

(b) REFERENCES.—Any reference in a law, map, regulation, document, paper, or other record of the United States to the facility referred to in subsection (a) shall be deemed to be a reference to the "Major General Oliver W. Dillard VA Clinic".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. TAKANO) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ELLZEY) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 7903, as amended.